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# Burgundian Sword Ritual: Charismatic and Regnal Authority at the Funeral of Philip the Good in Bruges, 1467<sup>1</sup>

BY ANDREW MURRAY

*Charles the Bold claimed sovereignty resided in his personal body and was legitimised by his virtues, especially that of justice. It has been debated whether these ideas were influenced by Humanism and if he can be described as a 'Renaissance prince'. This problem can be addressed through an analysis of Burgundian funerary ceremonies. During Charles's rule, such events were inspired by the French example of sacral monarchy. This article takes as a case study Philip the Good's funeral in Bruges in 1467, at which Charles was presented with a sword lifted from his father's coffin. This ritual allowed Charles to compare his authority to that of a king's by stating that, despite the reality of his ducal status, he inherited his father's lands as a unity and at the same moment. However, borrowing the term from Susan Reynolds, this ritual communicated a general 'regnal' status rather than a specifically 'regal' one because, unlike royal funerary ceremonies, it conflated Charles's official and individual persona, claiming legitimacy more through personal charisma than accepted laws and traditions. The importance Charles gave to his virtues and persona was therefore primarily due to his status as a regnal prince aspiring to monarchy.*

It is debateable whether Charles the Bold, the fourth Valois duke of Burgundy, was a 'Renaissance prince'. In 1976 Richard Walsh, studying the Italian intellectual influences at Charles's court, concluded that his 'Italianate veneer was little more than skin-deep and it is questionable if the duke could be described as a Renaissance prince in any meaningful sense'.<sup>2</sup> Walsh seems to have softened this position slightly by the time he published his book on the relations between Burgundy and Italy in 2005, in which he writes that Italian diplomats at Charles's court 'form an important link between Burgundy and Renaissance Italy' and their influence 'should not be overlooked'.<sup>3</sup> But Walsh still does not refer to Charles as a Renaissance prince.<sup>4</sup> In the same year, however, Arjo Vanderjagt came out in favour of this idea. He reads Charles the Bold as a prince who claimed legitimacy on his supposed virtues of justice and magnificence.<sup>5</sup> While the concept of 'magnificence' was adapted and developed

1 With thanks to The Society for Court Studies, the organisers and participants of *Burgund, Frankreich, England und das Reich* (Klaus Oschema and Eric Burkart, dir., Cusanus Institut, Trier, 2018), Jan Dumolyn, Joannes van den Maagdenburg and Carolina Armenteros. Special thanks to Peter Edwards, Andy and Clare.

2 Richard Walsh, 'The Coming of Humanism to the Low Countries: Some Italian Influences at the Court of Charles the Bold', *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 25 (1976), pp. 146-97, p. 182.

3 Richard Walsh, *Charles the Bold and Italy (1467-1477): Politics and Personnel* (Liverpool, 2005), p. 166.

4 Walsh notes that some believe Charles to be a 'proto-Renaissance prince' but he does not use it himself, *ibid.*, p. xxx. See also pp. 193-5, 219-20.

5 Arjo Vanderjagt, 'Practicing Nobility in Fifteenth-Century Burgundian Courtly Culture: Ideology and Politics', in David R. Knechtges and Eugene Vance (eds), *Rhetoric and the Discourses of Power in Court Culture: China, Europe, and Japan* (Seattle, 2005), pp. 321-42, see pp. 322-3.

from Aristotle in thirteenth-century Scholasticism, it became a cornerstone of Humanist ideals for princes during the fifteenth century.<sup>6</sup> It is within this intellectual context that Vanderjagt situates Charles the Bold's conception of himself and his authority, noting in particular the Classical texts that Charles may have encountered such as translations of works by Xenophon and Quintus Curtius.<sup>7</sup>

These debates parallel a wider one on the suitability of the concept of 'Renaissance' to the Burgundian court and towns. I cannot provide here a survey of the vast literature on this subject,<sup>8</sup> but I can point out how the various positions different scholars take depend not only on their definition of the Renaissance, but also on the sources or subjects on which they base their analysis. For instance, Hanno Wijsman, drawing our attention to manuscript and book collections, does not see a deep engagement with Humanism or an attempt to revive Classical art and thought in Burgundy.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardin analyses a different set of sources, urban ceremonies in Italy and Burgundy, and on the basis of their similarities and cultural transfers, argues for a 'civic Humanism' forming between them.<sup>10</sup>

To address the more specific conflict of interpretation over Charles's politics, I propose we analyse a subject that is not considered by either Walsh or Vanderjagt, that is, the inaugural ceremonies Charles presided over, notably the funeral for his father in 1467 and his ritualised accession as the next duke. As Ralph Giesey has demonstrated in the context of French royal funerary and coronation ceremonies, such inaugural events are useful for analysing how the individual person of the prince was conceived in its relationship to the office he wielded.<sup>11</sup> The well-known funeral of Philip the Good in Bruges in 1467 provides an opportunity to study how Charles communicated his succession, his authority and the legitimacy of each. One ritual during this event is particularly important. After the requiem mass, a sword was placed on Philip the Good's coffin by his Master of the Horse (*escuieure d'escuierie*) and, very shortly afterwards, was lifted by Charles's Master of the Horse who then walked with it before Charles as they left the church. This ritual declared Charles to be a supreme ruler in his own lands, inheriting his father's titles in a manner similar to a king: as a unity, with the same authority and without any fealty to a higher sovereign.<sup>12</sup>

An attention to this and other Burgundian funerary ceremonies supports Vanderjagt's claim that Charles believed sovereignty was inherent to his person. However, the context for this political thought will be shown not to be Humanism, but rather the combined

6 See Rupert Shepherd, 'Magnificence in Renaissance Philosophy', in Marco Sgarbi (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Renaissance Philosophy* (2020), [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02848-4\\_232-2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02848-4_232-2) (accessed 01/09/2020).

7 Vanderjagt, 'Practicing Nobility', pp. 333-6.

8 However, see Hanno Wijsman, 'Northern Renaissance? Burgundy and Europe in the Fifteenth Century', in Alex Lee, Pierre Péporté and Harry Schnitker (ed.), *Renaissance? Perceptions of Continuity and Discontinuity in Europe, c.1300–c.1550* (Leiden, 2010), pp. 269-88, especially pp. 272-80.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 286.

10 Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardin, 'L'art au service de la persuasion politique: les cérémonies italiennes et bourguignonnes au XVe siècle', in Luisa Secchi-Tarugi (ed.), *Rapporti e scambi tra umanesimo italiano ed umanesimo europeo* (Milan, 2001), pp. 109-20, see pp. 110 and 120.

11 Ralph Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony in Renaissance France* (Geneva, 1960); Ralph Giesey, 'Inaugural Aspects of French Royal Ceremonies', in János M. Bak (ed.), *Coronations. Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual* (Berkeley, 1990), pp. 35-45.

12 Renate Prochno, *Die Kartause von Champmol: Grablege der burgundischen Herzöge 1364–1477* (Berlin, 2002), p. 121; Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, *D'or et de cendres. La mort et les funérailles des princes dans le royaume de France au Bas Moyen Âge* (Villeneuve d'Ascq, 2005), pp. 260-1; Hans Cools, 'Uitvaarten als intredes: De scenografie van de successie bij aristocratische begrafenissen in de Bourgondisch-Habsburgse landen en de jonge Republiek', in Mario Damen and Louis Sicking (eds), *Bourgondië voorbij. De Nederlanden 1250–1650* (Hilversum, 2010), pp. 193-206, pp. 196-7; Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony*, p. 137.

conditions of Charles wanting to declare himself a supreme ruler in his own lands whilst also not having a royal title. This position is corroborated by the research of Wim Blockmans and Werner Paravicini. Like Vanderjagt, they also argue that Charles claimed his authority was inherent to his own body and person, but they emphasise that in doing so he was modelling himself on, as well as setting himself against the French king.<sup>13</sup> While Vanderjagt shows how Charles believed that his authority was conferred on him directly from God rather than mediated by the Church,<sup>14</sup> he does not consider how Charles bypassed royal authority and also sought a crown for himself. An analysis of Burgundian funerary ceremonies, and especially the sword ritual, demonstrates that while Charles adopted symbols from French royal ceremonies, his lack of a royal title and desire to be compared to a king led him to emphasise his own body and persona when fashioning himself as a supreme ruler, and he would have done so regardless of whether he was explicitly informed by Classical texts or Humanist ideals.

There were three interrelated distinctions between the funerary ceremonies over which Charles presided and their royal exemplars. Firstly, the act of Charles lifting the sword from his father's coffin symbolically conflated the succession of the new duke to his father's titles with the accession to his ducal authority. As Giesey has shown, in fifteenth-century France the royal succession was proclaimed at the funeral,<sup>15</sup> whereas the possessive authority the king had over his subjects was realised at the coronation when his office was consecrated as a sacral one. This possession was ritualised again in a triumphal entry into Paris and, in the sixteenth century, at his enthronement in a *Lit de Justice*.<sup>16</sup> This ritualised differentiation between the moments of inheritance and inauguration underlies the second difference between the Burgundian sword ritual and royal funerary ceremonies: the royal division between these two moments maintained the distinction between what Ernst Kantorowicz identified as the king's 'two bodies', his individual mortal body (and its inheritance of the father's titles) and the immortal office of kingship, a sacral body bestowed at the coronation.<sup>17</sup> But in Burgundian funerals during the rule of Charles the Bold there was no clear distinction between the individual and his office. The final difference between royal and Burgundian funerals was that the dignity of the Burgundian office was secular rather than sacral. During the sword ritual, the duke's authority emanated from his and his father's supposed virtue of justice.

The sword ritual therefore stated a supremacy to Charles's authority comparable to the French king despite not having a royal title. The most suitable word available for historians to describe it is that it was a 'regnal' rather than a 'ducal', 'princely' or 'regal' gesture. Susan Reynolds coined this term to provide a general adjective for medieval and early modern modes of rulership that were not necessarily monarchical.<sup>18</sup> It is the best word

13 Wim Blockmans, "'Crisme de leze magesté'". Les idées politiques de Charles le Temeraire', in Jean-Marie Duvosquel, Jacques Nazet and André Vanrie (eds), *Les Pays-Bas bourguignons. Histoire et institutions. Mélanges André Uytendaele* (Brussels, 1996), pp. 71-81; Werner Paravicini, "'Mon souverain seigneur'", in Peter Hoppenbrouwers, Antheun Janse and Robert Stein (eds), *Power and Persuasion: Essays on the Art of State Building in Honour of W.P. Blockmans* (Turnhout, 2010), pp. 27-48, see p. 30.

14 Vanderjagt, 'Practicing Nobility', pp. 332, 334-6.

15 Giesey, 'Inaugural Aspects', p. 38. See also Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, 1957), pp. 328-30.

16 Ralph Giesey, 'Inaugural Aspects of French Royal Ceremonials', pp. 40-2. A useful historiographical survey of rituals of possession is Jennifer Mara DeSilva, 'Taking Possession: Rituals, Space, and Authority', *Royal Studies Journal* 3 (2016), pp. 1-17.

17 Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*; see also Ralph Giesey, 'Inaugural Aspects', pp. 38-9; idem, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony*, p. 42.

18 Susan Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900-1300* (Oxford, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 1997), pp. 250-3.

available to describe the form of authority communicated by the sword ritual because, through it, Charles was claiming to have a singular, undifferentiated supremacy over his subjects despite traditions and laws stating otherwise. The imprecision of the ritual's meaning allowed him to make a statement of authority that extended beyond his actual status as a duke while simultaneously not affirming a clearly royal one.

The concept of 'regnal' is more suited to characterising Charles's political thought than that of 'Renaissance'. Charles ritualised his authority as based on his persona and virtues not due to the influence of Humanism, but because the ideal he aspired to, sacral monarchy, was not available to him. It could be argued that the concept of 'Renaissance' has an advantage over 'regnal' in that it differentiates Charles from 'medieval' princes and emphasises the long-term influence of his ideology and rituals. Indeed, Vanderjagt and others argue that Charles anticipated early modern monarchy more broadly conceived.<sup>19</sup> For instance, Éric Bousmar and Hans Cools claim that, despite never achieving sacral monarchy, the Valois Burgundian dukes increasingly conceived of their office as distinct from their mortal body, and this would influence how Maximilian of Habsburg would present his regency and Philip the Fair's rule.<sup>20</sup> However, my analysis of Burgundian funerary ceremony will demonstrate discontinuity in this chronology. When Habsburg-Burgundian funerals adopted the sword ritual after Charles the Bold's example, they would sacralise it by lifting the sword from the altar rather than from the deceased's coffin. They were able to do this because they had royal titles. If Charles's politics is to be contextualised within wider periodic and geographical developments, one would therefore have to specify the historical circumstances that make him an exception to the ideal type of 'Renaissance' or 'early modern' prince or, better still, incorporate or define regnal modes of authority as the norm for the fifteenth century rather than the exception. The latter strategy is precisely what Reynolds employs in her use of the term 'regnal', and John Watts extends the use of this term to analyse fifteenth-century politics.<sup>21</sup>

A second consequence of my analysis is that it revises how princely ceremonies can be conceptualised as a statement of power. Andrew Brown, Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardin and Graeme Small argue that civic and courtly ceremonies in Valois Burgundy allowed for multiple interpretations and therefore were not singular statements of ducal power.<sup>22</sup> However, I will argue that it was possible for a ceremony to affirm power because of, rather than despite its imprecise meaning. Such imprecision is evident in how the sword ritual performed a status for Charles that seemingly exceeded his actual titles, without claiming a clearly royal

19 Vanderjagt, 'Practicing Nobility', p. xxx. Vanderjagt goes a step further by comparing Charles's political beliefs to Louis XIV's statement '*L'état, c'est moi*', *ibid.*, p. 336.

20 Éric Bousmar and Hans Cools, 'Le corps du prince dans les anciens Pays-Bas, de l'état bourguignon à la Révolte (XIV<sup>e</sup>-XVI<sup>e</sup> siècles)', *Micrologus*, vol. 22 (2014), pp. 253-95, see pp. 270-2, 294-5.

21 For the suitability of this term for fifteenth-century states, see John Watts, *The Making of Politics: Europe 1300-1500* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 376-9. See also p. 69.

22 Andrew Brown, 'Ritual and State Building: Ceremonies in Late-Medieval Bruges', in Jacoba Van Leeuwen (ed.), *Symbolic Communication in Late Medieval Towns* (Leuven, 2006), pp. 1-28; idem, 'Bruges and the Burgundian "Theatre-State": Charles the Bold and Our Lady of the Snow', *History* 84 (1999), pp. 573-89; Andrew Brown and Graeme Small, *Court and Civic Society in the Burgundian Low Countries* (Manchester and New York, 2007), pp. 33-4; Graeme Small, 'When Indiciaires meet Rederijkers: A Contribution to the History of the Burgundian "Theatre State"', in Johan Oosterman (ed.), *Stad van koopmanschap en vrede: Literatuur in Brugge tussen Middeleeuwen en Rederijkerstijd* (Leuven, 2005), pp. 133-61, pp. 152-3; Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardin, *La ville des cérémonies: espace public et communication symbolique dans les villes des Pays-Bas bourguignons (XIV<sup>e</sup>-XV<sup>e</sup> siècles)* (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 231, 324, 302-3, 327-8; eadem, *Le Royaume inachevé des ducs de Bourgogne (XIV<sup>e</sup>-XV<sup>e</sup> siècles)* (Paris, 2016), p. 23.

one. Lecuppre-Desjardin applies a set of categories to Burgundian ceremonies that provide one way to give conceptual precision to this argument. Borrowing the typology from Max Weber, Burgundian ceremonies manifest three types of authority: charisma (the personal qualities of the ruler, real or imagined, that make his rule acceptable or not); tradition (customs and historical narratives that support the claim to rule); and law (the laws and privileges that mediate the relations between the ruler and ruled).<sup>23</sup> Lecuppre-Desjardin argues that for charisma to prevail in Burgundy 'it relies on characteristics that are traditional (dynastic heritage) and legal (secular domination of the county of Flanders, of Hainault ... on these lands)'.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, 'the princely skill is to nourish [*d'abreuer*] charismatic power at the well of traditional power ... so that this charismatic power is, in its turn, accepted as a traditional power'.<sup>25</sup> But what can be observed at Philip the Good's funeral is the opposite: I will show that Charles used his charisma to bend legal and traditional norms by confusing the personal virtues he imagined he inherited and possessed with his actual public office.

Finally, because Charles's regnal authority had a charismatic quality, his similarity to a Renaissance prince becomes explicable. If Charles legitimised his authority through appeal to and performance of his personal qualities and virtues, this was not necessarily due to Humanist intellectual influence, even if such a factor should not be ruled out, but primarily to his regnal position as a territorial prince asserting a supremacy akin to royalty without using that actual title or status.

### An Innovative Ritual and Funeral

Philip the Good died in Bruges on 15 June 1467. His funeral commenced on Sunday 21 June.<sup>26</sup> His embalmed body was carried from the ducal palace to Saint Donatian's church, a route that was lined with 600 torchbearers in black mourning robes, half provided by the city of Bruges and half by the court.<sup>27</sup> The procession included 1200 members of Philip's household also dressed in mourning garb.<sup>28</sup> They went two by two with those of the lowest rank ahead so that the rank of individuals rose the closer their position in relation to the coffin, which came further behind.<sup>29</sup> Also present were the bishops of Tournai, Cambrai and Salisbury, the

23 Lecuppre-Desjardin, *La ville des cérémonies*, pp. 231-2. See Max Weber, 'The Three Types of Legitimate Rule', transl. Hans Gerth, *Berkeley Publications in Society and Institutions*, vol. 4 (1958), pp. 1-11.

24 Lecuppre-Desjardin, *La ville des cérémonies*, pp. 231-2.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 232.

26 The most detailed analysis of the event is Prochno, *Die Kartause*, pp. 117-21, but see also Gaude-Ferragu, *D'or et de cendres*, pp. 260-2. The following four paragraphs are based on Prochno's analysis with corrections and additions. The primary source Prochno relies on is a contemporary account of the events in Archives départementales de la Côte-d'Or [hereafter ADCO], B310, transcribed in Prochno, *Die Kartause*, pp. 255-9. However, there are other sources to draw from. One is an account of expenditures in Archives départementales du Nord [hereafter ADN], Lille, B2064, fols 218-232v, transcribed in Gaude-Ferragu, *D'or et de cendres*, pp. 355-64. There are also three accounts from chroniclers: Joseph Kervyn de Lettenhove (ed.), *Œuvres de Georges Chastelain* (Brussels, 1863-6), vol. V, pp. 232-5; Jacques du Clercq, 'Les Mémoires de Jacques du Clercq', in J. A. Buchon (ed.), *Chroniques d'Enguerrand de Monstrelet* (Paris, 1826-7), vol. XV, pp. 140-5; and *Dits die Excellente Chronijcke van Vlaenderen* (Antwerp, 1531), fol. 130r, transcribed in *Digitale Bibliotheek voor de Nederlandse Letteren*, URL: [https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/\\_dito04dits01\\_01\\_0122.php](https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_dito04dits01_01_0122.php) (accessed 21/07/2020). A modern Dutch translation is Corrie de Haan and J. B. Oostermann (eds), *Is Brugge groot?* (Amsterdam, 1996), pp. 43-4, available at the *Digitale Bibliotheek voor de Nederlandse Letteren*, URL: [https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/\\_bruo02brug01\\_01\\_01002brug01\\_01\\_0002.php](https://www.dbnl.org/tekst/_bruo02brug01_01_01002brug01_01_0002.php) (Accessed 21/07/2020). A very brief description of Philip's 1467 funeral is also given by Jean de Haynin, see R.H.G. Chalon, *Les mémoires de messire Jean, seigneur de Haynin et de Louvegnies, 1465-1477* (Mons, 1842), vol. I, pp. 79-80.

27 Prochno, p. 117.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 117.

29 *Ibid.*, pp. 117-18.



suffragan bishop of Tournai, and twenty-two Flemish abbots.<sup>30</sup> It is unclear whether these came before or after the household.<sup>31</sup> However, so that these bishops and abbots could be closer to the coffin, the parish priests and mendicant orders of Bruges went before them.<sup>32</sup> Finally, leading the coffin, came a military contingent, including twelve officers of the guard and two sergeants-at-arms, all of whose mourning robes bore Philip's coat-of-arms.<sup>33</sup>

The coffin was covered by a gold cloth held at its edges by sixteen high-ranking barons.<sup>34</sup> Above it was a canopy of golden cloth.<sup>35</sup> This was carried by four lords (three counts and the son of the prince of Orange). Behind this ensemble was Philip's Master of the Horse who carried the deceased duke's sword, point up and in its sheath. Then followed Charles the Bold, the dukes of Cleves and Bourbon, Charles's nephews and other nobles including Philip's bastard sons. Finally, there processed the retainers of Charles's court. If one includes the residents of Bruges, wearing their own mourning garb, the ceremony comprised around 20,000 people.<sup>36</sup>

The church of Saint Donatian was draped in black, lit by 1,500 candles and decorated with around 2,000 ducal coats-of-arms.<sup>37</sup> During the three or four hours of vigils held that evening the 600 torchbearers lined the nave and choir.<sup>38</sup> Overnight, the coffin was placed under a catafalque in the ducal oratory.<sup>39</sup> This had a gabled structure above it covered with black velvet and shrouded with a crimson cloth stitched with gold thread (*drap d'or cramoisy*), one lined with black satin and having a white cross sewn across its span.<sup>40</sup> The sword carried in the procession was placed on the catafalque,<sup>41</sup> as were purpose-made paintings, with one panel depicting the crucifixion with Mary and John, the other just Mary.<sup>42</sup> Two hundred candles were placed on the catafalque, as well as four large ones at its corners which burned all night as heralds guarded the coffin.<sup>43</sup>

The burial took place the next day. After a requiem mass, during which Charles and other relatives received communion, the coffin was lowered into the ground before the main altar and Philip's chamberlain and sergeants-at-arms threw their batons of office upon it.<sup>44</sup> According to Jacques du Clercq, some had to lift them back up (perhaps due to being transferred to Charles's service).<sup>45</sup> Planks were placed over the grave and then a black cloth was lain

30 *Ibid.*, p. 117.

31 Prochno claims they came before citing paragraph 15 of ADCO B310, eadem, *Die Kartause*, pp. 117, 257. This is supported also by paragraph 18 ('après les gens d'église vindrent par belle ordonnance deux a deux tous lesdiz officiers petiz et grans dudit hostel'); and paragraph 21, which list these officers 'après les gens d'église'. But in contradiction to these statements is the next paragraph, number 22: 'après lesdiz officiers portans le dueil comme dit est estoient les quatre eveques en pontifficaux qui sont cy dessus declairez, acompaignez de gens d'église revetuz ainsi qu'il appartient.' The next paragraph then states that after the clergy came the *officiers d'armes* who lead the coffin. I cannot explain this seeming contradiction.

32 *Contra* Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 117, see paragraph 16 of ADCO B310 (Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 257).

33 Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 118.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 118.

35 *Ibid.*, p. 118, noted as golden in ADCO B310 paragraph 25 (Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 258).

36 On the information here and the previous three sentences, *ibid.*, p. 118.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 118.

38 *Ibid.*, pp. 118-19.

39 Prochno claims this was in the choir, eadem, *Die Kartause*, p. 118. But ADCO B310 suggests it was in the oratory, *ibid.* fol. 5v (Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 258). Jacques du Clercq confirms this, idem, 'Les Mémoires', p. 144.

40 ADN, B2064, fols 224v-225r (Gaude-Ferragu, *D'or et de cendres*, p. 362, also see *ibid.*, p. 137). Also see Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 118.

41 Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 119.

42 ADN, B2064, fols 223v-223r (Gaude-Ferragu, *D'or et de cendres*, p. 360-1).

43 Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 119.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 119.

45 Du Clercq, 'Les mémoires', p. 145.



over them.<sup>46</sup> Finally, the ducal sword was placed, point down, onto this cloth by Philip's Master of the Horse, and then a few moments later lifted point-up by Charles's Master of the Horse, who carried it in front of the duke when leaving the church 'just as it was carried before the father [Philip] when he was alive'.<sup>47</sup>

This funeral seems to have been carefully planned by Charles. The contemporary account claims that the provision of mourning robes for all the courtiers 'had been deliberated by My Lord the Duke Charles'.<sup>48</sup> A comparison of this funeral with prior Burgundian ones indicates the depth of his involvement. Not only was the sword ritual new to such ceremonies, but the whole funeral seems to have departed from prior examples to give more importance to the burial than to the procession and, in doing so, draw more attention to this novel event.

No similar ritual seems to have occurred for Philip the Good's father, John the Fearless, and grandfather, Philip the Bold.<sup>49</sup> John had three funerary ceremonies. The first was organised by the Armagnac faction (a group of anti-Burgundian nobles in the French court) on the day after he was assassinated during negotiations with the French dauphin in Montereau on 10 September 1419; the second took place on the morning of 25 June 1420, two days after his exhumation by Burgundian and English forces; and the final ceremony occurred on 12 July 1420 in the Charterhouse of Champmol, Dijon, where his body was finally interred.<sup>50</sup> There is no mention of a sword ritual or the accoutrements necessary for it in the sources for these events,<sup>51</sup> not even during the second ceremony at which Philip the Good and Henry V were present.<sup>52</sup> This is unsurprising as Philip had at this point assumed his father's titles for the eight months since his death, negating any demand for a rite of passage by the time John's body was recovered.

There is also no mention of a sword ritual taking place for the funeral of Philip the Bold in 1404. In his will of 1386 he 'forbid expressly that there be other lights or chivalric ceremonies except solely those of masses and prayers'.<sup>53</sup> He requested only that the church be lit by thirteen torches carried by thirteen poor people and that four candles should be placed at the four corners of his tomb.<sup>54</sup> The funeral ceremony seemed to be more splendid than this will suggests. Repairs were done in 1409 to the windows of the ducal oratory in which holes were made 'at the burial of my said lord',<sup>55</sup> suggesting either that the service was crowded or that many more candles were used than stipulated in Philip's will.<sup>56</sup> But, while the funeral and the extensive funeral procession that preceded it (discussed below) were more extravagant than Philip's will would suggest, it is unsurprising that Philip shunned chivalric

46 Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 119.

47 'qui [Philip's Master of the Horse] tenoit ladict epee poincte contre terre mist icelle epee de son long couchee et baisant la croix laquelle incontinent fut relevee par l'esquier d'escuirie de Monseigneur le duc Charles, nommé Roichequin lequel s'en vint devant lui au dep(ar)tir dela et la leva droicte tout ainsi que l'on la souloit porter devant monseigneur le pere quant il vivoit.' ADCO, B310, fol. 7v (Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 259). I cannot find any evidence that the sword was handed over to Charles, as Prochno states in eadem, *Die Kartause*, p. 119.

48 '... que a esté delibéré par monseigneur le duc Charles', *ibid.*, fol. 1r (Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 256).

49 Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 120.

50 Bertrand Schnerb, 'Les funérailles de Jean sans Peur', *Annales de Bourgogne* 54 (1982), pp. 122-34; Prochno, *Die Kartause*, pp. 116-7.

51 Schnerb, 'Les funérailles', pp. 129-34.

52 ADN, B1602, fol. 97v (Schnerb, 'Les funérailles', p. 130).

53 'et defens expressement qu'il n'y ait aut(re) luminaire ne autres solempnitez de chevaulx, fors seulement de messes et d'oroisons'. ADCO, B30911 (Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 348).

54 *Ibid.* (Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 348).

55 ADCO, B11673, fol. 200v (Prochno, *Die Kartause*, pp. 239-40).

56 Argument of Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 240.

ceremony because he was buried in a Carthusian habit as a member of this monastic order.<sup>57</sup> Finally, John is unlikely to have ritualised the transfer of power between him and his father because, unlike Charles the Bold, he publicly demonstrated that his inheritance was conditional on his loyalty to the king of France. He left the funeral cortège to swear fealty to Charles VI in Paris, re-joining it later as it waited for him outside Dijon.<sup>58</sup>

A clearer precursor to Philip the Good's funeral is that for Louis of Male, Philip the Bold's father-in-law, which took place on 28 February 1384.<sup>59</sup> This funeral involved a complex chivalric ceremony, *pièces d'honneur*, in which items of chivalric equipment — shields, lances and horses — were symbolically offered to the deceased by being placed in front of the altar.<sup>60</sup> Philip the Bold and Margaret of Flanders presented a shield to the altar,<sup>61</sup> and this gesture must have signified the passage of Louis's titles to the Valois line,<sup>62</sup> similar to how the sword ritual in 1467 represented Charles the Bold's succession. However, there are two key differences between this ritual and the sword ritual at Philip the Good's funeral. Firstly, the ritual of *pièces d'honneur* gave much less centrality to Philip the Bold than the sword ritual did to Charles. Philip the Bold presented the shield with his wife, and they were the principal — not the only — nobles to perform such an honour. Secondly, in contrast to the shield at Louis's funeral, the sword was not placed on or lifted from an altar. The ducal authority it symbolised was represented as secular.

These two factors — the centrality given to Charles during the sword ritual and the secularity of the gesture — are related: the sword ritual gave central importance to Charles because it represented the power as existent in his person, unmediated by either the Church or the king. I will address the secularity of the sword ritual in greater depth in the next section. I will conclude this one by demonstrating how the extent of the centrality given to the sword ritual and Charles as a ruler during the funeral is also demonstrated by a comparison between the procession for this ritual and those for earlier Burgundian funerals.

Apart from the inclusion of the sword ritual, Philip the Good's funeral was also innovative in that it gave greater emphasis to the burial over the procession. The funerals of his father and grandfather involved a procession through multiple towns. Philip the Bold's cortège travelled 550 kilometres between Halle, where he died, and the Charterhouse of Champmol outside Dijon, where he was eventually buried.<sup>63</sup> After leaving Halle it stopped at a minimum of

57 Opinion of Prochno, *Die Kartause*, pp. 114-15, and of Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, 'Les dévotions princières à la fin du Moyen Âge: les testaments des ducs de Bourgogne et de leur famille (1386-1477)', *Revue du Nord* 354 (2004), pp. 7-23, at paragraphs 19 and 37, accessible at *Cairn.info*, URL: <https://www.cairn.info/revue-du-nord-2004-1-page-7.htm#> (accessed 20/07/2020).

58 Archives municipales de Dijon [hereafter AMD], B146, fol. 51r; Prochno, *Die Kartause*, pp. 120-1; Bertrand Schnerb, *L'État bourguignon 1363-1477* (Paris, 1999), p. 140.

59 Schnerb, *L'État bourguignon*, pp. 75-8; Joseph Kervyn de Lettenhove (ed.), *Oeuvres de Froissart* (Brussels, 1871), vol. IX, pp. 11-18; Archives Générales du Royaume, Brussels, ms. no. 100, fols 4r-7v, transcribed in A. G. B. Schayes, 'Description des Obsèques de Louis de Male, Comte de Flandre, en 1383', *Messager des sciences et des arts de la Belgique* (Ghent, 1838), pp. 299-307; Bibliothèque nationale de France [hereafter BnF], ms. no. 8380, in M. Van Praet, *Recherches sur Louis de Bruges, seigneur de la Gruthuyse* (Paris, 1831), pp. 257-9.

60 Schayes, 'Description des Obsèques', pp. 304-6; Kervyn de Lettenhove (ed.), *Oeuvres de Froissart*, vol. IX, pp. 13-16; BnF, ms. fr. 2799, fol. 291v-292r. On the history of *pièces d'honneur* see Malcolm Vale, *The Princely Court: Medieval Courts and Culture in North-West Europe, 1270-1380* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 241-4.

61 Schayes, 'Description des Obsèques', p. 304; Kervyn de Lettenhove (ed.), *Oeuvres de Froissart*, vol. IX, pp. 13-14; BnF, ms. fr. 2799, fol. 291v.

62 Schnerb, *L'État bourguignon*, pp. 75-8.

63 Prochno, *Die Kartause*, pp. 114-16.

eleven further towns before reaching Dijon.<sup>64</sup> These towns received the duke in their principal church overnight, each receiving a gold cloth worth twelve *escus*.<sup>65</sup> Towns other than those Philip's cortège passed through also paid their respects. On 3 May delegates from Bruges met with others from Ghent and 'deputies from other towns' to travel to Arras to meet the Duchess who was in mourning there.<sup>66</sup>

The transferal of John the Fearless' body from Montereau to Dijon was riskier due to the possibility of an attack from the Armagnac faction,<sup>67</sup> but this did not prevent a procession similar to that of his father. After a funerary service at Montereau on 25 June, his remains were taken at night by boat upriver and were accompanied by a military escort for protection. On the way to the Charterhouse of Champmol it stopped at Cravant, Sens, Joigny, Auxerre, Avallon, Semur-en-Auxois and Vitteaux. The coffin was laid out in the church at each stop and greeted by the clergy, nobles and town representatives.<sup>68</sup>

Philip the Good was eventually processed through a series of towns similar to his father and grandfather when he was given a second funeral ceremony nearly seven years after his death. According to the contemporary record, Philip's internment in Bruges was a temporary measure until Charles 'had the required time to have [Philip] carried and led to the Carthusians of Dijon, according to the will of the deceased father'.<sup>69</sup> This 'required time' turned out to be between November 1473 and February 1474. Apart from Philip's heart and entrails, which were interred permanently in Saint Donatian near the main altar,<sup>70</sup> his and his wife's remains (buried in Artois) were transferred to Dijon.<sup>71</sup> A hundred torchbearers, all clad in black, accompanied each coffin independently, and a hundred followed them both when their processions merged on 7 January in Gembloux in the county of Namur.<sup>72</sup> Twenty-seven stops can be established as the bodies were taken to Dijon.<sup>73</sup> At each, the coffins were placed in a prominent church where evening vigils were said and candles lit.<sup>74</sup>

In restricting Philip's first funeral procession to the town of Bruges, Charles shifted the emphasis from the encounter between the deceased and his subjects to the burial and, with that, the sword ritual. This would have been to draw attention to Charles himself. The process of defeating a series of civic insurrections in Flanders from the 1430s accelerated the project of centralising ducal fiscal, legal and executive control,<sup>75</sup> and this greater degree

64 Geraardsbergen, Oudenaarde, Courtrai, Lille, Douai, Saint-Quentin, Neuchâtel-sur-Aisne, Troyes, Bar-sur-Seine, Châtillon-sur-Seine and Saint Seine-L'Abbaye.

65 ADCO, B1538, fol. 244r (Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 269). See also the receipt given for these drapes by Jacques Rapondi in ADCO, B310.

66 '... ghedeputeirden van den andren steden', L. Gilliodts-Van Severen, *Inventaire des archives de la ville de Bruges* (Bruges, 1871–1885), vol. III, p. 469.

67 Schnerb, 'Les funérailles', p. 127.

68 *Ibid.*, p. 128.

69 'jusques a ce que mondit seigneur son fils eust temps propice de le faire porter et conduire ez chartreux de Dijon selon la volenté dudit seigneur tr(ess)passé', ADCO B310, fols 6v-7r (Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 258). On Philip's wish to be buried at the Charterhouse of Champmol, see Guade-Ferragu, 'Les dévotions princières', paragraph 9.

70 Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 119, footnote 80; ADCO B310, fol. 7r (Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 259).

71 ADCO B310, fols 6v-7r (Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 258). The most extensive study on this ceremony is Werner Paravicini, 'Theatre of Death. The Transfer of the Remnants of Philip the Good and Isabel of Portugal to Dijon, November 1473–February 1474', in Karl-Heinz Spieß and Immo Warntjes (eds), *Death at Court* (Weisbaden, 2012), pp. 33–115. See also Gaude-Ferragu, *D'or et de cendres*, pp. 233–4 and Prochno, *Die Kartause*, pp. 120–1.

72 Paravicini, 'Theatre of Death', pp. 42–3.

73 *Ibid.*, p. 40.

74 *Ibid.*, p. 47.

75 Wim Blockmans, 'Alternatives to Monarchical Centralisation: The Great Tradition of Revolt in Flanders and Brabant', in Helmut Königsberger (ed.), *Republiken und Republikanismus im Europa der frühen Neuzeit* (Munich, 1988), pp. 145–54; idem, 'La répression de révoltes urbaines comme méthode de centralisation dans les Pays-Bas bourguignons', *Publication*

of central power was communicated by the centrality given to Charles at his father's funeral. The following sections will consider how the sword ritual expressed Charles's belief that such central power was located on his person rather than conferred by the church or the Crown.

### Succession, Possession and the Duke's Single Body

Although an innovation in Burgundian funerary ceremonies, the sword ritual was part of a wider trend from the early fifteenth century for French dukes to use a funeral to declare the succession of titles from the father to the son.<sup>76</sup> The sword being lifted from the grave symbolised Charles taking his father's titles (just as some officers lifted their batons, thus keeping their position). From a legal perspective, this was purely symbolic, for Charles's succession was secured through normal inheritance laws.<sup>77</sup> But, it was not an empty gesture. Although the 1435 Treaty of Arras stipulated that Philip the Good would not have to pay homage to Charles VII, and that his subjects would not be subject to the king during his life, these stipulations did not apply to Charles.<sup>78</sup> But Charles refused to address the French king as his '*souverain seigneur*' in the letter he sent to him declaring the death of his father, and continued to refuse this appellation often after 1470, especially after adopting that style for himself regularly from 1473.<sup>79</sup> In ritualising his direct succession to his father's titles and in not swearing allegiance to the king, the sword ritual was a clear statement that he would assume his inheritance without acknowledging royal suzerainty.<sup>80</sup>

As well as being a rite of succession, the sword ritual at Philip's funeral was also one of authority. Usually rites of possessive authority were held after the burial during the duke's ceremonial entries into individual towns.<sup>81</sup> For instance, when Charles the Bold approached the town of Mechelen for a ceremonial entry the gates shut on him. They reopened after a young woman dressed as 'the Maiden of Mechelen' presented him with a key to the city, thereby symbolising his possession of the town.<sup>82</sup> The possessive aspect of the sword ritual is evident in how its identifiable precedents did not represent succession, but rather royal authority. A sword was handed to the king at French coronations from perhaps as early as Philip II's in 1179, though the first recorded case is Philip III's in 1271.<sup>83</sup> As a symbol of his regency, the duke of Bedford also had a sword carried before him on the procession from Saint-Denis to Paris after the funeral of Charles VI in 1422.<sup>84</sup> Similarly, a requiem mass held for Bertrand du Guesclin in Saint-Denis in 1389 involved a sword. In the presence of Charles VI and the high nobility, *pièces d'honneur* were presented at the altar, including warhorses, standards, shields and finally a bare sword, point down.<sup>85</sup> This symbol was likely employed

*du Centre européen d'études bourguignonnes* 28 (1998), pp. 5-9; Robert Stein, *Magnanimous Dukes and Rising States: The Unification of the Burgundian Netherlands, 1380-1480* (Oxford, 2017), p. 174.

76 On the trend, see Gaude-Ferragu, *D'or et de cendres*, pp. 266-67, 348.

77 Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony*, p. 137. Also see Gaude-Ferragu, *D'or et de cendres*, p. 266.

78 Paravicini, "'Mon souverain seigneur'", p. 30.

79 *Ibid.*, pp. 28-9, 44, 47.

80 Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 120.

81 See Bousmar and Cools, 'Le corps du prince', p. 259; Lecuppre-Desjardin, *La ville des cérémonies*, pp. 123, 146-7.

82 Jesse D. Hurlbut, 'Processions in Burgundy: Late Medieval Ceremonial Entries', in Herman du Toit (ed.), *Pageants and Processions: Images and Idiom as Spectacle* (Newcastle Upon Tyne, 2009), pp. 93-104, see p. 101.

83 Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony*, pp. 68, 134; and Barbara Muriel, 'Coronation Sword and Scabbard of the Kings of France', URL: <https://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/coronation-sword-and-scabbard-kings-france#> (accessed 25/05/2020).

84 Giesey, *The Royal Funeral Ceremony*, pp. 45, 134.

85 Prochno, *Die Kartause*, pp. 119-20.

in recognition of Du Guesclin's role as Constable of France, the head of the royal army, and was therefore not simply a symbol of Du Guesclin's chivalry, but also his role as a representative of the royal privilege to wage war and maintain peace.<sup>86</sup> In using the sword for his father's funeral, Charles the Bold was therefore not only declaring his succession, but his supreme rulership, one independent from and comparable to the French monarch.

However, Charles did not have a royal title. This fact underlined three differences between royal funerals and his father's. Firstly, the ritual blurred the distinction between a rite of succession and of possession, representing both simultaneously in one gesture. If Charles was to make a general statement of possession appertaining to all of his territories, he could not do so by claiming to occupy a sacral office that unified his claim to all, or at least some, of his territorial possessions, as would a coronation for a French king.<sup>87</sup> Secondly, the sword ritual did not differentiate between the immortal, sacral body of Charles's office and his individual body. Charles had to represent his general authority as one he inherited directly from his father's body by lifting a sword from the coffin rather than as a mystical office transcending his and his father's mortal lives. Finally, the ritual was therefore secular, the sword being lifted from the coffin rather than the altar, and the inauguration occurring without sacramental ritual.

These three aspects of the sword ritual are highlighted by a comparison between it and the later Burgundian sword rituals it influenced. The first of these funerals was that of Philip the Fair's mother-in-law, Isabella of Castile, held in Brussels in 1505; the second was that of Philip the Fair himself, which took place at Malines in 1507; and the third was for Ferdinand of Aragon, staged in Brussels in 1516 (Philip the Fair's son, Charles, was the successor).<sup>88</sup> At these ceremonies, there was a sword ritual but, in contrast to that at Philip the Good's funeral, they were for royal figures. The ceremonies at each funeral were therefore able to differentiate between moments of succession and possession. During each ceremony, heralds declared the old monarch dead, dropping their batons, and then proclaimed the new monarch and their titles, raising their batons. Only after the succession of the new monarch was declared was a sword presented to the successor. In each case the hood of the successor's mourning cloak was lifted and the lead herald brought him the sword, announcing that it is given to the king so that he would maintain justice and defend his lands and subjects.<sup>89</sup> This was a statement of possession, but not of succession. Not only was the succession already declared, but the sword was taken from the altar and not, significantly, the coffin or tomb. The sword did not signify a transfer of powers or virtues from the deceased.

86 See the Musée de l'Armée's webpage dedicated to the fifteenth-century *Épée d'un connétable de France*, inventory number 2013.0.1196, URL: <https://basedescollections.musee-armee.fr/ark:/66008/201301196.locale=fr> (accessed 22/06/2020).

87 Giesey, 'Inaugural aspects', pp. 37-8.

88 Elisa Ruiz García, 'Aspectos representativos en el ceremonial de unas exequias reales (a. 1504-1516)', *En la España Medieval* 26 (2003), pp. 263-94, pp. 269-76; Barbara Haggh, 'Singing for the Most Noble Souls: Funerals and Memorials for the Burgundian and Habsburg Dynasties in Dijon and Brussels as Models for the Funeral of Philip the Fair in 1507', in Stefan Gasch and Birgit Lodes (eds), *Tod in Musik und Kultur. Zum 500. Todestag Philipp des Schönen* (Tutzing, 2007), pp. 57-85; Friedrich Edelmayer, 'Die Leichenfeiern für Ferdinand den Katholischen in den Niederlanden (1516)', in Lothar Kolmer (ed.), *Der Tod des Mächtigen: Kult und Kultur des Todes spätmittelalterlicher Herrscher* (Paderborn, 1997), pp. 229-45; Cools, 'Uitvaarten als intredes', pp. 197-8.

89 Jean Lemaire des Belges, *La pompe funérale des obseques du seu Roy dom Phelippes, filz unique de l'empereur Maximilian Cesar Auguste* (Antwerp, 1508), fol. CIIv; Adriaan van Meerbeeck, *Theatre funebre, ou sont representées les funerailles de plusieurs princes, et la vie, trespas, et magnifiques obseques de Albert le Pie* (Brussels, 1622), p. 54; Real Academia de la Historia, Madrid, Collection Salazar y Castro, *Libro manuscrito de protocolos de reyes de armas*, ms. 9/678, extract transcribed in Ruiz García 'Aspectos representativos', pp. 285-6.

That the sword was taken from the altar at these funerals also shows that there was a conceptual division of the ‘two bodies’ of the monarch, their individual one and their sacred office. Although Castilian monarchies were not anointed and tended not to have coronations,<sup>90</sup> these later royal Burgundian funerals still distinguished the succession of the individual monarch from a statement of their possessive authority, using the sword ritual to mark a sacred vocation for the monarch by lifting it from the altar. The future Charles V was also told by the herald both in 1506 and in 1516 that the sword was ‘given to you by God’.<sup>91</sup> The authority symbolised by the sword was therefore, in each case, not simply the virtues and titles passed through inheritance, but an everlasting, sacred office.

That Charles the Bold could not ritualise the existence of two separate bodies — an individual one with its series of titles earned through normal inheritance law on the one hand, and a sacral, royal office that transcended the existence of his individuality — is made clear by another royal sword ritual inspired by the Burgundian example. At the funeral of King Charles VIII in 1498 a sword was lowered in the vault onto the coffin before being lifted to the cry of ‘*vive le roi!*’.<sup>92</sup> Considering that the new king was not present at this funeral and that the cry did not mention the new king’s name, this ritual acclaimed the perpetuity of the mystical body of kingship rather than the accession of the new ruler.<sup>93</sup> In contrast, the succession of Charles’s personal titles and authority over his possessions was declared in the same instant because there was no sacral body of Burgundian kingship distinct from the duke’s individual claim to a series of titles. This is why it likely inspired the funeral of René II, duke of Lorraine, in 1508. At this event the cry of ‘*Le roi est mort*’ was later followed by ‘*vive le duc*’ after a sword was drawn from René’s coffin. His son did not claim his father’s royal title, King of Sicily.<sup>94</sup>

### Charismatic and Regnal Authority

The sword ritual characterised Charles’s succession as a unity without confirmation from Louis XI and his possession as one whereby he was the supreme ruler in his lands, again without fealty to France. However, both statements were backed up more by Charles’s personal will than by law and tradition. He was not a supreme ruler. His titles were split between ones such as Artois, Flanders and Picardy that were subject to the French Crown, and others such as the counties of Burgundy, Hainault and Holland and the duchy of Brabant, that were part of the Empire.<sup>95</sup> While imperial authority was distant and unobtrusive due to the privileges held by Charles’s imperial territories,<sup>96</sup> the Duke’s exclusive right to bear a ritualised sword symbolising his supremacy could be and was challenged by the French Crown.

90 María José del Río Barreda, ‘Felipe II y la configuración del sistema ceremonial de la monarquía católica’, in José Martínez Millán (ed.), *Felipe II (1527–1598): Europa y la monarquía católica* (Madrid, 1998) vol. II, pp. 677–704, pp. 677–8.

91 ‘ceste espée vous est donnée de Dieu’. See Lemaire des Belges, *La pompe funérale* fol. CIIv; Van Meerbeeck, *Theatre funebre*, p. 54. That there was a sacred nature of the Castilian monarchy is argued for by José Manuel Nieto Soria, *Fundamentos ideológicos del poder real en Castilla (siglos XIII–XVI)* (Madrid, 1988), pp. 49–109.

92 Elizabeth A. R. Brown, ‘Order and Disorder in the Life and Death of Anne of Bretagne’, in Cynthia Jane Brown (ed.), *The Cultural and Political Legacy of Anne de Bretagne: Negotiating Convention in Books and Documents* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 177–92, pp. 182–3. Although the register of the Parlement of Paris records that only a few heralds managed the cry due to being ‘half dead’ (*semimortuif*) by this point in the ceremony, *ibid.*, p. 183.

93 Giesey, ‘Inaugural Aspects’, pp. 38–9.

94 *Ibid.*, pp. 39–40.

95 Stein, *Magnanimous Dukes*, pp. 179–80.

96 *Ibid.*, pp. 179–80.



Such a challenge occurred when Louis of Luxembourg, the count of Saint-Pol, came to Bruges to meet Charles in May 1468.<sup>97</sup> He arrived with the regalia befitting his office as the Constable of France. He entered Bruges at the gate of the Holy Cross to the sound of six trumpets and followed by six pages and other knights and noble persons. He had carried before him a sword ‘completely like the prince of the country’, according to Chastelain.<sup>98</sup> Chastelain also reports that, on hearing the news, Charles became indignant and very acrimonious towards Louis. He ‘despised him in his anger and turned his heart to him in complete coldness, swearing by Saint George that he would reproach this outrage’.<sup>99</sup> Charles refused to see Louis for at least five days, and Chastelain states that it was unclear whether they did eventually meet at all. But, during his stay, Louis defended his actions to local noblemen, claiming he could comport himself in this manner in the kingdom of France, as the aforementioned examples of the duke of Bedford and Bertrand du Guesclin demonstrate, and that Flanders was officially a French fief. Although Louis was correct, with hindsight it is clear from the sword ritual at Philip’s funeral and Charles’s refusal to address the king as his sovereign lord that this Burgundian prince would also not have accepted the symbolic representation of French supremacy in Bruges that the Constable represented. Having no legal or customary claim against Louis of Luxembourg, Charles’s only recourse was to fall back on his charismatic individuality, this time by acting insulted. This was effective. The Constable left Bruges quietly, his trumpets and banners carried out in trunks, on the pretext that he was going on pilgrimage to Ardenburg.

Charles would have recognised that the sword ritual expressed who he wished to become as much as who he was. On 25 January 1468, during a ceremony celebrating his succession in the abbey of Saint-Bénigne in Dijon, Charles asked his audience ‘not to forget to speak of the kingdom of Burgundy that France has for long usurped and of it made a duchy all of whose subjects should well have regretted’.<sup>100</sup> One can read Philip the Good’s funeral as making the same statement: that Burgundy was a kingdom in essence if not in legal fact. Apart from the sword, another object used in the funeral to compare Burgundian authority to royalty was the golden canopy that was carried above the coffin. This item was usually reserved for kings.<sup>101</sup> Charles would have himself depicted framed by a similar object, a golden *lit de justice*, in the opening miniature of his personal copy of his military ordinances.<sup>102</sup> The *lit de justice* was widely read as symbolising royal justice and so Charles was claiming a similar authority for himself in using it.<sup>103</sup>

Charles would seek a royal title from Frederick III at the Imperial Diet in Trier, 1473.<sup>104</sup> Although this project failed there are similarities between Philip’s funeral in Bruges and Philip’s second burial, which was initially arranged to begin two days after Charles’s

97 On the following events, see Kervyn de Lettenhove (ed.), *Œuvres de Georges Chastelain*, vol. V, pp. 395-7.

98 ‘fit porter l’espée devant luy tout ainsi comme le prince du pays’, *ibid.*, vol. V, p. 395.

99 ‘s’en indigna contre luy et le porta à très-aigre’; ‘le contempna en son ayr et tourna son couer envers lui en toute froideuse, jurant Saint-George qu’il remonstreroit son oultrage’, *ibid.*, vol. V, p. 396.

100 ‘et n’oublia pas de parler du royaume de Bourgoingne que ceulx de France ont long temps adsurpé et d’icelluy fait duchié que tous les subjects doivent bien avoir a regret’ AMD, L413, fol. 203r, quoted in Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 120.

101 Gaude-Ferragu, *D’or et de cendres*, pp. 230-1.

102 *Military ordinance of Charles the Bold*, 1475, British Library, London, Add. MS 36619, fol. 5r. Digitised by the British Library, URL: <https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/ILLUMIN.ASP?Size=mid&IID=28858> (accessed 22/06/2020).

103 Paravicini, ‘Le parchemin de Montpellier’, pp. 312, 324, 353.

104 Stein, *Magnanimous Dukes*, p. 180; Petra Ehm, *Burgund und das Reich: Spätmittelalterliche Außenpolitik am Beispiel der Regierung Karls des Kühnen (1465-1477)* (Munich, 2002), pp. 117-97.



planned royal coronation by the Emperor on 18 November 1473.<sup>105</sup> Although the coronation was aborted, the final entry into Dijon still appeared similar to a triumphal entry.<sup>106</sup> As in Philip's first burial at Bruges, a golden canopy was carried above the coffin and a sword was placed upon it.<sup>107</sup> There was also a symbol not included in the previous funeral: an ornate hat was placed on the bier, one interpreted by some contemporaries as a crown.<sup>108</sup> Charles wore such a hat at Trier during his meeting with Frederick as well as at the first opening of the Great Council of Mechelen (the highest court of appeal in the Burgundian Netherlands and one that appropriated legal supremacy in Flanders from the Parlement of Paris).<sup>109</sup> Although this 'crown' symbolically communicated Charles's sovereign authority, he was not a king. Similarly, the precise meaning of the sword ritual in the first funeral is not clear, it being a statement of regnal authority that exceeded his normal rights of inheritance and sovereignty, but without any regal basis.

That excess authority, one between his actual titles and the status he wanted, was Charles's charisma: his personal and proclaimed beliefs about his virtues and vocation. The virtue being proclaimed at the sword ritual was likely that of justice. At the funerals of Philip the Fair and Ferdinand of Aragon, described above, the lead herald declared the sword lifted from the altar to be a 'sword of justice'.<sup>110</sup> Although the sword is not given a similar appellation at Philip the Good's funeral, swords often symbolised justice in late medieval art and thought,<sup>111</sup> and did so in Burgundy. In the Montpellier parchment, an enigmatic Burgundian image made during Charles's reign that depicts *Iustitia* enthroned, a sword is shown in *Iustitia*'s right hand as she touches Charles's coat-of-arms with her left (fig. 1).<sup>112</sup> Below that another sword is depicted in the right hand of a figure whose right side is a swordsman and whose left side is a lawyer and who therefore administers justice on earth.<sup>113</sup> While Charles might not have been involved in creating this iconography, Jean Molinet, whom I suspect was involved in its production,<sup>114</sup> does report an incident where Charles devised a similar monument. Encamped with his army at Neuss, Charles erected a wooden cross on which was displayed a bare sword and gauntlet in the centre of a market to warn his soldiers not to injure or steal from the local merchants.<sup>115</sup> His soldiers were well-behaved due to this '*miroir juridique*'. This was just as well. According to Olivier de la Marche, Charles executed some of his archers personally (*de sa main*) for pillaging the church during the sacking at Liège.<sup>116</sup>

105 Paravicini, 'Theatre of Death', pp. 54-5.

106 *Ibid.*, pp. 55-6.

107 *Ibid.*, pp. 50-2; Gaude-Ferragu, *D'or et de cendres*, pp. 230-1.

108 Paravicini, 'Theatre of Death', pp. 51-2; Gaude-Ferragu, *D'or et de cendres*, p. 234.

109 Ehm, *Burgund und das Reich*, pp. 198-9.

110 Lemaire des Belges, *La pompe funérale*, fol. CIIv; van Meerbeeck, *Theatre funebre*, p. 54. The sword was called a 'sword of honour' at the funeral of Isabella of Castile, see Ruiz García 'Aspectos representativos', pp. 285-6.

111 Stefan Huygebaert, 'The Sword, between Symbol and Judicial Practice', in Stefan Huygebaert *et al.* (eds), *The Art of Law: Three Centuries of Justice Depicted* (Bruges, 2016), pp. 163-6.

112 Werner Paravicini, 'Le parchemin de Montpellier, une image troublante du règne de Charles le Téméraire', *Journal des savants* 2 (2010), pp. 307-70, see pp. 347-55.

113 Andrew Murray, 'The Montpellier Parchment and the Signature of *Iustitia*', *Acta Academiae Artium Vilnensis* 94 (2019), pp. 301-23, at p. 315. Note that this figure does not seem to be Charles the Bold himself, Paravicini, 'Le parchemin de Montpellier', pp. 332-7.

114 Murray, 'The Montpellier Parchment', pp. 316-18.

115 Maria Golubeva, *Models of Political Competence: The Evolution of Political Norms in the Works of Burgundian and Habsburg Court Historians, c. 1470-1700* (Leiden, 2013), p. 42.

116 Catherine Emerson, *Olivier de La Marche and the Rhetoric of Fifteenth-Century Historiography* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 216-17.



FIGURE 1 *The Montpellier Parchment*, c. 1467–77 (Montpellier, Bibliothèque municipale, fonds Cavalier no. 216; Photo: Médiathèque Centrale Emile Zola Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole)

That Charles personally executed his archers at Neuss indicates his identification with the virtue of justice and with the sword as a symbol of it. He would often be represented with a sword, notably in the reliquary statuette depicting himself with St. George in Liège,<sup>117</sup> but also prominently in illuminations found in manuscripts of the *Excellente Chronijcke van Vlaenderen*, images that could be based on a lost panel.<sup>118</sup> Justice was also a concept frequently

<sup>117</sup> Gerard Loyet, *Reliquary of Charles the Bold (with St. George)*, 1467–71, Cathedral of Liège.

<sup>118</sup> See Lisa Demets, 'Charles the Bold at the Battlefield of Nancy from the Excellent Chronicle of Flanders', in Pierre Terjanian, Andrea Bayer and Adam B. Brandow (eds), *The Last Knight: The Art, Armor and Ambition of Maximilian I* (New York, 2019), pp. 68–9; and The Morgan Library, ms 435, fol. 352v, URL: <http://ica.themorgan.org/manuscript/page/21/112315> (accessed 24/07/2020).

referred to in his ordinances and speeches,<sup>119</sup> and his fervour for personally executing it was also institutionalised in the public audiences he held to resolve cases brought to him and which other nobles were obliged to attend.<sup>120</sup> At the start of his rule, these were held three times a week and, according to Chastelain, ‘they would last two or three hours according to the multitude of requests, to the great annoyance of the audience’.<sup>121</sup>

There is no clear evidence for how the sword ritual was interpreted by Charles’s courtly and civic audience. There does not seem to have been any acclamation at the ritual itself.<sup>122</sup> But it is likely that Charles’s audience interpreted this symbol as a representation of the duke’s virtue of justice as well as his position as the highest judicial authority. Several chronicles claim Philip was widely mourned at the funeral due to his virtues. A description of the funeral in the *Excellente Chronijcke van Vlaenderen*, one probably written by Anthonis de Roovere, claims that ‘There was great mourning, which was understandable because Philip had been a pious and good prince and had reigned for a long time’.<sup>123</sup> Two other chronicles associate Philip’s virtues with the ability to defend his lands. Chastelain’s description of the funeral includes a long eulogy that he claims were the collective sentiments of those in attendance. It addresses Philip as someone ‘who has pacified all the brutal wars around us and even among us; [...] who has nourished peace and unity between your peoples, who has established justice and commerce, and who assured the tranquillity of our travels’.<sup>124</sup> Jacques du Clercq gives a similar explanation for the mourning of Philip. He claimed that:

When the body was interred, no-one knew how to express the great compassion of the tears of the officers, and others present; truth be said that each who were subject to the duke had to and could cry, because they lost on this day the most renowned prince of Christendom, full of largesse, honour, bravery and valour, in short, replete with the most noble virtues, who has guarded all his lands in peace, at the point of a sword, for all and against all, without sparing his own body.<sup>125</sup>

119 Dumolyn, ‘Justice, Equity and the Common Good: The State Ideology of the Councillors of the Burgundian Dukes’, in Jonathan Boulton and Jan Veenstra (eds), *The Ideology of Burgundy: The Promotion of National Consciousness, 1364-1565* (Leiden, 2006), pp. 1-20, at pp. 7-10, Golubeva, *Models of Political Competence*, p. 42.

120 Paravicini, ‘Le parchemin de Montpellier’, pp. 347-55.

121 ‘Là se tint deux, trois heures, selon la multitude des requestes, souvent toutesfois à grand tannance des assis, mais souffrir en convenoit.’ Georges Chastelain, cited in Paravicini, ‘Le parchemin de Montpellier’, p. 350.

122 Prochno, *Die Kartause*, p. 119.

123 ‘Ende daer was grote droufheyt bedreuen, als wel redene was, want hy een vroom ende eerlic prinche gheweist hadde, ende langhe gheregneirt hadde.’ *Dits die Excellente Chronijcke van Vlaenderen*, fol. 130r. On the complex authorship of this text, see Lisa Demets, ‘The Late Medieval Manuscript Transmission of the Excellente Cronike van Vlaenderen in Urban Flanders’, *The Medieval Low Countries* 3 (2016), pp. 123-73, see pp. 132-3, 135. Lisa Demets has pointed out to me that though De Roovere is the author of this section, surviving earlier manuscripts do not include mention of Philip’s virtues. Douai, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 1110, fols 253r-253v reads ‘ende daer was groote droufhede bedreven, alst recht was’ and Bruges, Openbare Bibliotheek, Ms. 437, fol. 321v only mentions the burial. It could be that the printed edition offered more praise to Philip or that the section praising him is from a lost manuscript.

124 ‘qui toutes diverses guerres en l’environ de nous et en dedans de nous-mesmes avez ramené en estat tranquille; ... nourri le paix et union en vos peuples; donné siège à justice et à marchandise, et à tranquille repaire voie et cours’. Kervyn de Lettenhove (ed.), *Œuvres de Georges Chastelain*, vol. V, p. 233. My translation has relied on the modern French version in Danielle Régner-Bohler (ed.), *Splendeurs de la cour de Bourgogne: récits et chroniques* (Paris, 1995), p. 905.

125 ‘Quant vint à metre le corps en terre, n’est homme qui sceut dire la grande pitié des pleurs des officiers et autres illeq present; à verité dire chacun pooit et devoit plourer qui estoit sujet au duc; car ils perdoient ce jour ung prince le plus renommé qui fus rust la terre des chrestiens, plein de largesse, plein d’honneur, plein de hardiesse et valliance, et brief, rempli de moult nobles vertus, lesquel avoit tous ses pays gardé en paix, à la pointe de l’espée, envers tous et contre tous, sans en rien espargner son corps’. Du Clercq, ‘Les Mémoires’, pp. 144-5.

Even if we would more reliably attribute these sentiments to these chroniclers rather than to Philip's mourners, they are evidence that widespread mourning for the duke could be read as a means to praise his concluded rulership.<sup>126</sup> Indeed, Chastelain, Jean Molinet and Jean de Haynin would each write their own poetic elegies mourning Philip and proclaiming his virtues.<sup>127</sup> In their prose descriptions of the funeral and its mourners, Chastelain and Du Clercq believed that these virtues included the ability to maintain peace, for Clercq at the 'point of a sword', and for Chastelain with justice. As well as being concepts adopted by the Burgundian dukes, peace and justice were also key concepts and *desiderata* of urban political discourse in Burgundy.<sup>128</sup> At the conclusion of the burial those virtues and capacities that were mourned by those in attendance were the ones Charles was claiming to uphold when he lifted a sword from his father's grave. He also associated his succession with the continuation of justice in writing. In the announcement sent to the councillors of his southern territories two days after Philip's funeral, he declares his father's death, requests prayers for him, and then states that 'for the good of justice in our southern lands and of our subjects within them we require and mandate that you continue and persevere the administration of justice and the exercise of your offices'.<sup>129</sup>

The sword ritual was therefore not just an expression of Charles's public persona as a supreme judicial authority, but also of his proclaimed virtue as a just ruler. Traditional, legal and charismatic authority here merge into one another without clear distinction. Just as a simultaneous declaration of succession and possession blurred the distinction between individual persona and public office, so did this combination of the personal virtues with the office itself. Charles was declaring a regnal status that exceeded his ducal one while not amounting to a royal one, and he did so by using charisma to extend his authority beyond accepted laws and traditions.

## Conclusion

Communicating an ideal future and a dignified and joyful present, Burgundian ceremony did not simply represent the power of the state on the one hand or (potentially) maintain or extend that power, but also fulfilled the desire of their participants to occupy positions of visibility where they could be admired and respected. However, their participants could not always perform their ideal selves. In contradistinction to representing oneself as embodying virtue — to be just, to be magnanimous — one cannot perform kingship without actually having the title. While the sword ritual could claim for Charles a regnal authority comparable to a king by representing his inheritance of his father's lands as a unity and with the same authority, his status was not a regal one. Indeed, the sword ritual distinguished Charles from his royal counterpart, as it did not distinguish between his individual persona and public office. Rather than ritualise the presence of 'two

126 On the phenomenon of mourning as a form of acclamation in Burgundy, see Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardin, 'L'histoire de la principauté de Bourgogne en chansons: une propagande bien orchestrée', in Laurent Hablot and Laurent Vissière (eds), *Les paysages sonores: Du Moyen Âge à la Renaissance* (Rennes, 2016), pp. 125-142, URL: <https://books.openedition.org/pur/47096> (accessed 23/07/2020), see paragraphs 13-25; also see Andrew Murray, 'Political Emotion in the Mourners of Philip the Bold's Tomb', in Philipp Ekardt, Frank Fehrenbach and Cornelia Zumbusch (eds), *Politische Emotionen in den Künsten* (Hamburg, 2020), pp. 25-42.

127 Kervyn de Lettenhove (ed.), *Œuvres de Georges Chastelain*, vol. XII, pp. 237-80; Noël Dupire (ed.), *Les faitz et dictz de Jean Molinet* (Paris, 1936-1939), vol. I, pp. 36-58; Antoine Leroux de Lincy (ed.), *Chants historiques et populaires* (Paris, 1857), pp. 146-50; idem (ed.), *Recueil de chants historiques français, depuis le XIIe jusqu'au XVIIIe siècle* (Geneva, 1841-2), vol. I, pp. 363-7.

128 Dumolyn, 'Justice, Equity and the Common Good', pp. 8-10.

129 ADCO B16, fol. 160v, translated into modern French in Schnerb, *L'État bourguignon*, p. 232.

bodies' — institutional and personal — at his father's funeral, the sword, being lifted from the father's coffin, contradicted such a doctrine.

Charles never achieved the royal title that he desired and therefore the sword ritual is one which provides further evidence to the claims made by Brown, Small, and Lecuppre-Desjardin that Burgundian ceremonies would have little discernible or reliable impact on the structure and integrity of the Burgundian state.<sup>130</sup> But the sword ritual demonstrates how traditional and legal norms could be transformed to suit how a ruler desired to be regarded by others, manifesting a form of personal ambition that exceeded, rather than represented, their legal and traditional authority. Power is not action justified and accepted by consensus, admirable ideals or functioning institutions and protocols; it is often what exceeds or breaks laws and tradition, sometimes to the point of incoherency, and is accepted nevertheless. The communication of central authority could therefore be augmented rather than diminished by the imprecise legal and traditional meaning of a ceremony.

Such forms of charismatic power need to be seen to be effective. Having no constitutional effect or traditional or legal basis, the sword ritual was not effective in and of itself — *ex opere operato* — but rather only in the view of others: in recognition rather than in law. It is therefore unsurprising that Charles would seek to maximise the public attention on the sword ritual by performing it at the burial and by reducing the size and time given to the procession, thereby delaying the actual ceremony his father desired, that is, a burial in Dijon.

As noted above, the sources we analyse will determine how we respond to the question on whether Charles the Bold was a 'Renaissance prince' and whether Burgundy had its own Renaissance. An analysis of Burgundian funerary ceremonies was always going to demonstrate a stronger influence of the French monarchy over Humanist ideals from Italy. Nevertheless, my analysis of these rituals has demonstrated that Charles would have conceptualised his authority as based in his individual body and virtues with or without Humanist influence, even if the latter cannot be discounted as a factor. He would have done so because he asserted a regnal authority that exceeded his status as a territorial prince owing fealty to a sacral monarch, claiming a supremacy modelled on the French crown but without a royal title. This combined royal aspiration and regnal reality is more likely to have determined what books and ideas Charles was receptive to rather than vice versa. While a 'regnal' prince might not be as aesthetic a concept as a 'Renaissance' one, it fits within a political history of the fifteenth century, like John Watts's, which accepts as a norm the often complex, negotiated and combined titles and statuses of princes.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Brown and Small, *Court and Civic Society*, pp. 33-4; Brown, 'Ritual and State Building', pp. 9-13, 27; Lecuppre-Desjardin, *La ville des cérémonies*, pp. 327-8; Small, 'When Indiciaires meet Rederijkers', pp. 138, 144, 153.

<sup>131</sup> On Watts's use of the term 'regnal', see note 21 above.